

Alaska Injury Prevention Newsletter – February 2004

Alaska News and Resources

1. Alaska Transportation Safety Stewardship Conference
2. Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence – Alaska's Report Card

National News and Resources

3. National Inhalant Prevention Coalition
4. Widespread Misuse of Air Bag On-Off Switches in Pickups
5. Road Safety Theme for World Health Day

Miscellaneous

6. Bowflex Machines Recalled
7. Consumer Product Safety Commission

1. On April 6 & 7, 2004, Alaska DOT is inviting professionals and policy makers who address land transportation safety for rural and urban areas in Alaska to the Alaska Transportation Safety Stewardship Conference in Anchorage. The conference is a forum to discuss how transportation safety data is collected, how safety problems are addressed, methods used to correct safety issues, and transportation safety planning for the future. The conference will be held at the Bill Sheffield Alaska Railroad Depot at the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport. There is no registration fee; anyone interested in participating in the conference is asked to email Jill Sullivan at DOT (jill_sullivan@dot.state.ak.us) to get a registration form.

2. Alaska received a D- grade from the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence and has been placed in "Time-Out Chair" for its new legislation that allows people to carry concealed handguns without having a permit. The Brady Campaign states that Alaska can improve its grade next year by banning assault weapons, requiring child-safety locks to be sold with guns, and holding adults responsible for leaving loaded guns around children. Full information on the report can be found at the Campaign's website: www.bradycampaign.org

Did you know?

- Every day in the U.S., 77 people die from gun violence. There are 16,586 completed suicides, 10,801 homicides, and 776 unintentional shootings.
- Nearly all childhood unintentional shooting deaths occur in or around the home.
- Firearm injuries are the third leading cause of death among children ages 10-14 and the second leading cause of death for ages 15-24.

3. Take part in the 12th annual National Inhalants & Poisons Awareness Week, March 21-27! The National Inhalant Prevention Coalition (NIPC) distributes email updates to inform readers of current news, information, trends, and research. The Coalition also has current data showing the rise in inhalant use including individual state data. Information about treatment facilities is also available on the website: www.inhalants.org

4. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has found that air bag on-off switches are often misused. More than 12 million pickup trucks and a smaller number of passenger cars and cargo vans without rear seats are equipped with airbag on-off switches. Proper use of the switches requires drivers to turn the air bag off for children 12 and under, but activate it when the passenger seat is occupied by an adult. The survey found that drivers with children in rear-facing child safety seats achieved the highest rate of correct use of the air bag switch. On average, 48% of air bag switches were incorrectly left on for child passengers, ages

12 and under; and air bag switches were incorrectly turned off for 17% of teenage and adult passengers. Complete survey results can be found on the NHTSA website: www.nhtsa.gov

5. April 7th is World Health Day and Road Safety is the theme. CDC's Injury Center has developed an information kit, Family Road Safety: Protect the Ones You Love for World Health Day 2004. The materials in the kit include a fact sheet on road traffic injuries and deaths, a sample press release, a brochure that describes activities communities can do to recognize World Health Day, and a list of resources for additional information. You can access the materials above at the CDC website: www.cdc.gov/injury and if you would like a free copy of the information kit, send an email to ohcinfo@cdc.gov.

6. Thousands of popular Bowflex machines are being recalled because of safety problems that have resulted in more than 70 injuries. The Consumer Product Safety Commission says the machine's backboard bench can unexpectedly collapse when being used in the incline position. There are also problems with the "Lat Tower"; the frame of the tower can weaken over time, twist forward and fall – hitting the user in the back, head, or shoulder. Customers that have purchased a Bowflex can contact Nautilus Direct at 1-888-424-3020 to receive a repair kit.

7. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission tracks injuries or deaths in over 15,000 consumer products. To report a dangerous product or a product-related injury, call CPSC's hotline at 800-638-2772 or CPSC's teletypewriter at 800-638-8270. Other information and product recalls are available on the website: www.cpsc.gov.



Workouts are great – if done safely!

This message has been compiled by the Section of Community Health and EMS (CHEMS), Alaska Division of Public Health and sent to subscribers of the AK-Prev and AHELP list-serves. It has also been sent to others in Alaska including Public Health Centers, SAFE KIDS coalitions, Native Health Organizations, and regional EMS Councils and Coordinators who may be interested and active in injury prevention and health promotion. The purpose is to share resources, breaking news, training opportunities, product recalls, and opinions to help prevent injuries to Alaskans. Feedback and contributions are encouraged. Contributions can be directed to Mary Krom, mary_krom@health.state.ak.us

Link for the AK-Prev and AK-EMSC list serve: http://chems.alaska.gov/ems_list_servers.htm

Link for AHELP list serve: <http://www.auroraweb.com/ahec>